

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

Getting this one out just under the wire!

The **Self-Development** column takes a look at the notion of style, especially management style.

In the **Elephant in the Room** column we revisit the recent statement by former Special Council Robert Mueller on the Russian Collusion probe, and how his words are being parsed by various parties.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column I share an important insight tendered by one of my clients. It's important stuff, so read it.

The **World of Words** column, as always, offers you a great opportunity to sound, . . . erudite!

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Style

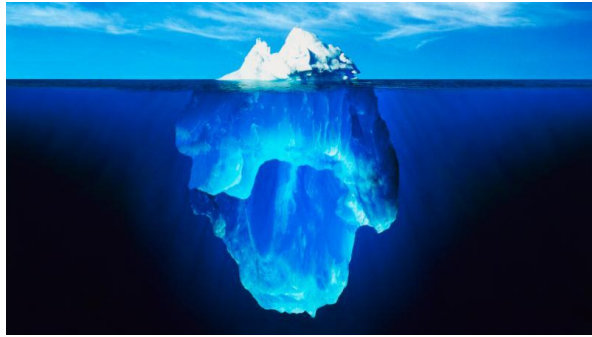
*"On matters of style, swim with the current,
on matters of principle, stand like a rock."*
Thomas Jefferson

Style, that is, how you come across as a manager, as a leader, as a contributor, matters. It may not matter as much as substance. Yet it matters. Just as an attractive, suitable frame can make a picture come alive and adorn a room, likewise, an appropriate, inviting style can enhance a person's praiseworthy character. Style is to substance what personality is to character.

Allow me to elaborate on this theme for a moment.

Take a look at the picture to the right. You'll notice several things. First, you will see that the tip of the iceberg, while quite large, is dwarfed by the vast portion of the iceberg beneath the surface of the water. What is underneath, and is invisible to the eye, is much larger and more substantive when compared to what is above

the surface of the water, and is visible to the eye. That's a nice analogy to the comparison of substance (not easily seen, yet much more vast) and style (easily seen but less consequential.) Similarly, just as we could say the "tip" of the iceberg is situated on a foundation of something much more expansive, likewise, our personality should spring from our character which serves as a foundation for everything else.



When it comes to one's management style, or, how one deals with the people that work for them, it is evident that two broad approaches present themselves:

- One can manage from a place of trust, empowerment, and positivity, or
- One can manage from a place of scarcity, doubt, cynicism, and suspicion.

The latter approach is about control The former approach is about release.

The latter approach assumes workers are incompetent, immature, and lacking in initiative. The former approach presumes that workers are capable, driven, and simply need some initial direction to get started.

While some variation of the latter approach may be necessary in certain circumstances (crises, emergencies, or when someone is brand new and lacks the requisite experience to perform), most people respond better to the former approach.

Finally, I will suggest that since people tend to be more open to managers who are more like them and to whom they can relate, it would be a smart practice if managers (and others) became a bit more *chameleonic* -- adjusting their style somewhat to accommodate the tastes, proclivities, and mannerisms of those they manage. Being chameleonic -- that is, adapting your style to the person you are interfacing with -- can reap significant dividends. It will make you more empathetic, and it will strengthen your relationship with your team, providing you with greater influence.

Not a bad outcome.

The Elephant in the Room

Deconstructing Robert Mueller's Public Statement

On Wednesday of this week (May 29th), we were favored with a rare appearance by Robert Mueller.

As most everyone knows, Mr. Mueller, for the past two years, was the Special Counsel appointed to investigate allegations of Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election, as well as to specifically investigate whether President Donald Trump or anyone in his campaign had colluded with the Russians to affect the outcome of the election. He also was trying to determine if Mr. Trump had engaged in Obstruction of Justice.



After two years of investigating, and after spending over \$30 million, the Mueller Report was released on April 18th, 2019. The Report indicated that no one on Mr. Trump's campaign was found to be guilty of collusion of any kind with any group, organization, or nation-state, and that includes the Russian government. As for the obstruction charge, the Mueller Report did not provide any evidence in support of such a crime.

The reactions to this report were very telling, yet predictable. For Mr. Trump and his supporters, it was seen as a huge victory. For Mr. Trump's critics, there was outrage, as they were expecting the report to unequivocally find Mr. Trump guilty of being a Russian asset (i.e., a spy) and also to be unambiguously found guilty of obstruction of justice.

While Mr. Mueller has been quite reclusive during this investigation, giving no media interviews, it was with great surprise that he opted to come forward on May 29th to make a public statement. While Mr. Mueller refused to take any questions, he did make a number of comments that were noteworthy. One in particular is rather jugular, and I share it below, in italics. My response will follow.

"As set forth in the report, after the investigation, if we had confidence that the president did not clearly commit a crime, we would have said so."

I would like to ask Mr. Mueller this question: "If you had confidence that the president did clearly commit a crime, would you likewise have said so?"

I would be asking that question, not because I am uncertain what the answer is, but because I would wish to make a point: since Mr. Mueller would have stated clearly that Mr. Trump did commit a crime if the evidence suggested that, or that Mr. Trump did not commit a crime if the evidence pointed in that direction, that means only one thing: Mueller's two-year investigation failed to turn up evidence either way. Inasmuch as there is no evidence that Mr. Trump committed a crime, what is the proper response from Congress?

Perhaps the following would be a helpful way to sort this out:

Let's imagine someone suggested you had run a red light. You find yourself in court. If it can be proven you did, in fact, run the red light, the proper response is for the Judge to issue you a citation which carries with it a fine.

After the Prosecution presents its case, and the Defense presents its case, it soon

becomes apparent that there is no evidence you ran a red light.

Granted, the prosecution may have revealed you own a fast car, or that you once said over drinks that you have considered running red lights, or that you once, many years ago, did run a stop sign and received a citation at that time.

Let's agree that perhaps you did run the red light for which you are now charged. And let us also agree that perhaps you did not run the red light for which you are now charged. Outside of yourself, no one knows for sure, and you insist you are innocent.

What would the judge do? There are no witnesses. There is nothing on camera. There isn't even clear evidence that you were driving a car that day. Would the judge punish you when no one has established conclusively you ran the red light? Would the judge issue you the citation and the fine on the grounds that, since no one proved you didn't run the red light, you should be punished?

The judge would dismiss the case and you would walk away free and clear -- whether you ran the red light or not. This is because we only punish what we can prove, and evidence is the path to proof.

If, upon hearing the verdict in your favor, the Prosecuting Attorney shouted in the courtroom: "If I had confidence that the defendant clearly did not run that red light, I would have said so! Therefore, you should punish him, your Honor," the judge would have laughed out loud at the idiocy of such a statement.

So what do we have with our Congress?

Republican Representative Justin Amash, who despises President Trump and is convinced, without a shred of evidence, that Mr. Trump is guilty of being a Russian Spy, as well as an obstructionist of a crime that was never committed in the first place, etc., tweeted as follows following Mr. Mueller's public statement: "The ball is in our court, Congress." Translation: Mr. Trump must be impeached because Mr. Mueller couldn't bring himself to say Mr. Trump had clearly not committed a crime, which obviously means Mr. Trump clearly did commit a crime."



Presidential candidate Cory Booker, who also hates Mr. Trump, tweeted as follows: "Robert Mueller's statement makes it clear: Congress has a legal and moral obligation to begin impeachment proceedings immediately." Oh? Is Mr. Booker claiming to be capable of reading Mr. Mueller's mind? Or perhaps Mr. Booker is correct, and that Robert Mueller was issuing a sort of dog whistle, encouraging punishment for a crime that was never proven. If so, Mr. Mueller is as partisan as any Leftist.



Presidential candidate Kamala Harris tweeted: "What Robert Mueller basically did was return an impeachment referral. Now it is up to Congress to hold this president accountable. We need to start impeachment proceedings. It's our

constitutional obligation." Let me get this straight: Congress is obligated to impeach a President for a crime that Mr. Mueller admitted was not proven had ever occurred?



Presidential candidate Peter Buttigieg, the openly homosexual mayor of Bend, Indiana, tweeted as follows: "The message really is: 'Over to you, Congress. This is as close to an impeachment referral as you could get under the circumstances.'" I can think of a closer scenario: If Mr. Mueller produced evidence that Mr. Trump broke the law and then Mr. Mueller issued an impeachment referral. How about that, Mr. Buttigieg?



I could go on quoting a seemingly endless parade of Leftists and other Trump-haters who belch out the same irrational vitriol, but I think you get the picture. The Mueller investigation spent two years, millions of dollars, and lots of resources to find evidence, even a shred of evidence, that Mr. Trump colluded with the Russians and/or obstructed justice. The investigation unequivocally found Mr. Trump (and anyone in his campaign) was completely exonerated -- found innocent -- of colluding with the Russians. That means the original allegation of a crime never took place in the first instance; it was a hoax. As to the second charge involving obstruction of justice, the two-year investigation attempted to turn up solid, unequivocal evidence that Mr. Trump was guilty of obstruction. No such solid, unequivocal evidence was found.

But to the Left, evidence does not matter in deciding court cases; only one's irrational ideological passions matter.

One final important point that most everyone has overlooked. As noted previously, the Mueller investigation focused on two separate, distinct crimes. The first was collusion (either by Mr. Trump himself, or by anyone associated with his campaign). Mueller's team found no evidence of collusion. Their report essentially exonerated Mr. Trump on that count. Why did they exonerate him of the charge of collusion? Because they found no evidence of collusion. They did not prove that Mr. Trump did not collude with the Russians. They only failed to find any evidence that Mr. Trump did collude. So they exonerated him.

Yet we have the same situation with respect to the second charge, concerning obstruction of justice. The Mueller Report did not find evidence of obstruction. Yet for that charge they are leaving open the possible but unproven allegation that Mr. Trump obstructed.

Why are they not similarly leaving open the possibility that Mr. Trump also colluded? After all, as with obstruction, there was no clear evidence Mr. Trump colluded either. Yet he was cleared of collusion charges. . . Makes one wonder.

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

Check out [my website](#) for tools to help you with your career, your presentations, and other matters.

Shameless Plug

Need Help Preparing For That Next Big Interview?

So you have trouble with job interviews? You get nervous? You feel unprepared? You get psyched out? I understand. And that is why I am pleased to alert you to my eBook: ***Your Interview Roadmap***. At over 12,000 words and with six appendices, this guide book will open your eyes to what really goes on in the world of interviewing from both sides of the table, and will prepare job seekers to hit it out of the park 80% of the time. (OK, more like 90%, but I prefer to be understated.)



If you are interested in purchasing the product, you can [click here](#) to make your purchase. The

advice you will glean from this eBook is golden! I would charge you six times the price of the eBook to give you the same advice in person.

If you've done poorly in job interviews in the past, you can turn it around. The answers are there. Take action!

From Ara's Journal

You Are To Blame

I had recently invited one of my clients to participate in a panel discussion I was hosting. As the Q&A started to wind down, I asked each panelist to offer some final words of advice. My client suggested that under no circumstances should the members of the audience consider themselves victims. He went on to suggest that if something goes wrong in their life or in their business, that they should take responsibility for it. In fact, he went on to say that in most situations, they should shoulder the blame for when things go wrong, and refrain from blaming anyone else. The reason? Because if you blame yourself and take ownership for the mishap, you place yourself in a position to be able to fix it. As long as you insist

on blaming others, you are powerless to fix it (after all, if you are not responsible, then you are incapable of steering the ship in the right direction. You have to wait on someone else to course-correct.) But if you operate under the assumption that you are the one responsible for the problem, then you instantly place yourself in a position to re-take control and correct the problem right away.



I consider that important food for thought. . .

The World of Words

Augur

Building Your Power of Expression

Augur, v.

Pronunciation: ôgər



Meaning: To portend a good or bad outcome. To foresee or predict. To give promise of.

Usage:

- *The end of the cold war seemed to augur well.*
- *The return to the gold standard augured badly for industry.*
- *This bad news augurs disaster for all of us.*

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